

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 617

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A RESOLUTION to recognize and honor Petty Rasbury Farm on being named the Maury Alliance Century Farm of the Year.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly salute that most noble agricultural institution, the family farm, which serves as a cornerstone for our rural communities while providing food and fiber for Tennessee and beyond; and

WHEREAS, one such noteworthy family farm is the Petty Rasbury Farm of Maury County, which is still owned by members of the Petty and Rasbury families today and has been honored as the Maury Alliance Century Farm of the Year; and

WHEREAS, the Century Farm Program was established to recognize the dedication and contributions of those families who have retained ownership of the same farm for more than a century, persevering through succeeding generations and coping with wars, floods, droughts, economic crises, and other obstacles presented by way of natural and human intervention; and

WHEREAS, the genesis of the Petty Rasbury Farm can be traced to H.O. Petty, who inherited approximately 130 acres of land in the Hollywood community of Maury County from his father circa 1900; and

WHEREAS, H.O. Petty married Erma Jane Morgan circa 1910, and in 1913, the couple purchased the current home place of approximately 160 acres, where H.O. and Erma raised their four children: Hesta, James, Joy, and Pete; and

WHEREAS, during World War II, German prisoners of war from the camp in Lawrenceburg were sent to work on the Petty farm; Mrs. Petty allowed the Germans to eat and smoke while working, although it was against the rules; and

WHEREAS, the Petty and Rasbury families first met when Pete Petty became friends with Victor Rasbury and Ted Davis while all three of them were serving in the United States Navy; and

WHEREAS, sadly, Pete Petty was killed during his military service, and Ted and Victor came to Columbia to pay their respects to the Petty family; during their visit, Ted Davis arranged a blind date between Victor Rasbury and Joy Petty; and

WHEREAS, a native of Wayne County, Victor Rasbury began his career in agriculture by raising chickens and cattle and won the Outstanding 4-H Club Member Award in the eighth grade; after his family moved to Lewis County, he graduated from high school there and then attended Tennessee Polytechnic Institute (now Tennessee Technological University) before joining the U.S. Navy circa 1950; and

WHEREAS, after their first meeting, Victor Rasbury and Joy Petty corresponded by mail during his military service; after being discharged from the Navy, Victor Rasbury returned to college and married Joy Petty in December 1953, with old friend and matchmaker Ted Davis serving as best man; and

WHEREAS, Joy's father, H.O. Petty, died in January 1954, and because her brothers were deceased and her sister was living in Nashville, Joy Rasbury inherited the five tracts of approximately 700 acres from her father; and

WHEREAS, her husband, Victor Rasbury, then quit college, and they moved to the farm to maintain its operations, which included raising milk cows, beef cattle, tobacco, corn, and wheat; the Rasburys operated five dairy farms at one time and also raised and showed Tennessee Walking Horses; and

WHEREAS, Victor and Joy Rasbury operated the Petty Rasbury farm from 1954 until Mrs. Rasbury's death in 2012, after fifty-eight years of marriage; and

WHEREAS, for nearly sixty years, Victor and Joy Rasbury worked the farm together with love, pride, and joy, with Mrs. Rasbury serving as bookkeeper; they were always true partners, even when they didn't agree; and

WHEREAS, today, Mr. Rasbury and his daughters and son-in-law continue to run the family farm; although he leases four tracts of land to other farmers, he still raises beef cattle on the home place; and

WHEREAS, Victor and Joy's daughters, Patricia Rasbury and Susan Rasbury, plan to continue operating Petty Rasbury farm in the third generation; Patricia lives in Nashville, and Susan and her husband live and work with her father on the family farm, where the table built by Mr. H.O. Petty still remains in the kitchen; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly finds it appropriate to acknowledge and applaud the members of the Petty and Rasbury families for their dedication to agriculture, recognizing the importance of the family farm to our rural communities and the State of Tennessee; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby recognize and honor Victor Rasbury and his daughters, Patricia and Susan, upon Petty Rasbury Farm being honored as the Maury Alliance Century Farm of the Year in recognition of its contributions to agriculture and Tennessee's history and heritage, and we extend to these fine citizens our best wishes for every future success

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.